

# **Chevy Chase Village Tree Selection Policy**

*Draft 9/2015*

In Chevy Chase Village our responsibility is to deliver to the next generation of Village residents trees and green spaces that maintain the character and beauty of those that were delivered to us, and to enhance them to the best of our abilities. Following are guidelines and policies for selection of trees to be planted by the Village.

We should choose trees that are well suited to our semi-urban environment. This means that they can survive and thrive while confined by streets and sidewalks, assaulted by salt and exhaust fumes, etc. It also means that they should not be unusually damaging to their surroundings, for example by having roots that are sure to destroy sidewalks or to find their way into sewer lines.

We should not become over-reliant on any particular tree species. If our predecessors had chosen to line the streets with American Chestnut and American Elm trees, our canopy could have been wiped out entirely.

We should avoid species that the next generation will wish we had not chosen because of the nuisance factor. This might include, for example, excessive seasonal seed, fruit, or nut dropping.

The trees, individually and collectively, should be visually pleasing. While this seems a trivial concern against larger ecological issues, it is a big part of what makes the Village appealing.

While we generally want diversity in the canopy, some single-species lineups along one or more blocks can be distinctive and are worth preserving.

Species native to the Eastern forest are important to the ecosystem and help to sustain local wildlife, including birds and beneficial insects. We encourage the use of native species for both Village planting and for planting by residents. More detail on this policy follows.

1. Tree species that are native to the Eastern forest will normally be used, recognizing that non-native species and cultivars of native trees may be appropriate in certain circumstances (i.e., when seeking to maximize canopy under utility wires (e.g., London Plane vis-à-vis the more disease prone American Sycamore, etc.)). Whenever they are practicable in the circumstances, canopy trees that are deciduous hardwoods that reach a minimum mature height of forty (40) feet shall be used.
2. If a resident requests planting of a non-native species in the right-of-way adjacent to their home, representatives from the Tree and/or Environment &

Energy Committee will contact the resident to understand the attributes the resident seeks in the non-native species and to inform the resident of native alternatives that might provide the same benefits (i.e., spring flowering, autumn color, foliage/canopy spread, etc.).

3. When replacing a non-native tree required to be removed, the Tree Committee will determine if there are benefits to maintaining the non-native species, including right-of-way aesthetics (such as maintaining an existing line of Cherry trees), space allocations, abutting resident requests, and lack of appropriate native alternatives, which outweigh the advantages of shifting to a native species on the site.
4. When selecting species, Village staff should not be limited to its primary nursery source, but will work with the Village Arborist to locate cost-effective native species from other area nurseries, provided these sources are not substantially more expensive.